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ABSTRACT

A followup study looked at the language development of three children (aged 5-6 years during the present study) three years after initial observation. Initially, the children were Spanish-dominant; all had one native English-speaking parent; all were learning English easily. The followup study involved parent interviews and observations of the children interacting together and with others outside school. It focused on the children's use of Spanish and English in their daily lives and their expressed attitudes toward the languages. In the first phase of the study, the power of English was symbolized in the power of English-speaking superheroes appearing in the children's dramatic play, but English was used only in interactions related to superheroes or role-playing. Three years later, the children spoke no Spanish spontaneously with each other or their parents, were reluctant to use Spanish even when pressed to do so, and were limited in their abilities to express themselves in Spanish. It is concluded that all three children reversed their language dominance over three years, and while broad generalizations are not possible in the three cases, the children appear to actively construct their own uses of and attitudes toward the two languages from complex influences. (MSE)

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Superhuman forces:
Young children's English language acquistion and Spanish language loss

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Introduction

This paper presents follow-up data on three young children three years after their initial bilingual development in preschool was documented (Faulstich Orellana, 1992). The purpose of the paper is to describe how the children currently use their two languages (Spanish and English) in their daily lives, to examine the forces that have shaped their present abilities in and proclivities for each language, and to consider the implications for bilingual development within particular sociocultural contexts.

Relatively little longitudinal data exists which details young children's bilingual language development over a period of time, and which includes attention to the social, contextual, and attitudinal forces that influence that language acquisition and use. The classical studies that have documented the language development of bilingual children are case studies of individual children (Leopold, 1947, Ruke-Dravina, 1967, in McLaughlin, 1978) that have been conducted from a psycholinguistic rather than a sociolinguistic framework. Fantini's (1976) studies of the Spanish-English bilingual development of his young son are an important exception in that they highlight the sociolinguistic variables that shaped the child's bilingualism, but, like the children in the classical studies, Fantini's son was raised in a privileged environment which allowed him regular access to prestigious uses of each language (largely through international travel). The contact that most bilingual children in this country have today with their two languages is not quite so parallel, but the ways in which that non-parallelism affects language development has gone largely unexplored.

Certainly, some more recent research has focused on bilingual and biliterate developmental processes among less privileged social groups, but these studies have generally focused on the patterns of development evident among groups of children in institutions such as school (García, 1983; Santos, 1984; Edelsky, 1986) rather than on the developmental paths that individual children have followed. Similarly, while increasing recognition has been given to the role of the relative (perceived) prestige of each language on children's bilingual development (Lambert, 1977; Gardner, 1981; Taylor, 1987; Lambert, 1987; Cummins, 1989), as well as to the relationship between children's language acquisition and their socio-linguistic environments, little work has been done to examine how children reflect larger social forces in their uses of the two languages, and much more attention has been given at the individual level to processes of *acquisition* than to those of potential language *loss*.

Lambert (1977) first made the distinction between "additive" and "subtractive" bilingualism, with additive bilingualism only possible when children live in conditions that allow for the full development of their home language, and subtractive bilingualism more likely to develop in situations where the home language is not valued within the larger culture. Children in the latter setting may gain a new language at the expense of their home language, culture, and self-esteem. In examining bilingual development, then, it is important to consider the contexts in which children are exposed to each language, as well as the value that is placed on the languages in each setting.

As children enter formal institutions at younger ages, through child care and preschools, this concern becomes more critical. Young children readily acquire new languages, but the new languages may just as readily replace their first languages. Work by García (1983) demonstrates that pre-school children who had equal exposure to Spanish and English at home tended to be more advanced in English, even when enrolled in a bilingual, bi-cultural preschool. Wong Fillmore (1991) presents large-scale data which suggests that language loss is occurring among first generation immigrants to the United States at a faster rate than at any time in the past, in part due to the increasing influence of English-dominant preschools. Wong Fillmore discusses the potentially disastrous effects of this language loss for communication within families and documents patterns of loss using large-scale survey data.

The present study represents an ongoing effort to examine the processes of language acquisition and/or loss at the micro-level, through case study analyses of three individual children within their respective social, cultural, and linguistic contexts, and with attention to the forces that shape their language development as well as their attitudes toward the two languages over time.

The first phase of the study

The first phase of this research was conducted when the children ranged in age from 2 years, 10 months to 3 years, 6 months. The children were observed interacting with each other and their peers at their preschool and at the homes of two of the families; semi-formal interviews were also conducted with each of the parents in order to establish patterns of language use in the homes and to capture the parents' perspectives on the children's language uses.

At that time, the children were decidedly Spanish dominant, using Spanish for almost all interactions at home and at school. While each child had one parent who was a native English speaker, and one who was a native Spanish speaker, Spanish was emphasized in all interactions with the children, and none of the children spoke English before attending the preschool. The adults did show a tendency to use more English for their own conversations at home.

In the observation sessions, the children spoke Spanish with each other on virtually all occasions, with one exception: when play-acting at being someone other than themselves, and particularly when pretending to be characters from popular children's culture. In these activities, the English-speaking voice of the characters was signaled by a change in the quality and tone of the children's voices, and was often interrupted by comments (as stage directions for the creative play) made by the children, in their normal voices, in Spanish. See Faulstich Orellana (1992) for a detailed description of these code switching events.

At the time of the original study, it was concluded that the children were easily acquiring English, and developing a sophisticated versatility in their manipulation of two language systems, all in a short period of time, and all without overt encouragement from their parents. Factors in the home, school, and larger society that were pulling the children toward English, and conceivably away from Spanish, were considered, but at that time there was no evidence to suggest any first language loss.

Follow-up data collection

Follow-up data, which were collected exactly three years after the original study, when the children (Elisa, Verónica, and Carlos) ranged in age from 5 years, 10 months to 6 years, 6 months, consisted of interviews with the parents of the children, and observations of the children interacting together and with other children outside of school. The focus of this phase of the research was on the degree to which the children used Spanish and English in their daily lives, as well as details of those uses and of the children's expressed attitudes toward the two languages. The audiotaped interviews were semi-formal in nature, and focused on the children's uses of the two languages at home, with relatives, and in school, as well as on their attitudes toward the two languages as observed by the parents. Factors that may influence the children's uses of the two languages were probed, with attention to the efforts the parents had made to retain the children's bilingualism.

The children were observed interacting with each other (with at least 2 of the 3 children present) on six separate occasions. One child, Elisa (referred to as "Elena" in the first phase of the research), is the child of this researcher, and was therefore available for regular, daily observations over the three years; thus more attention is given here to Elisa's language development than to that of the other two children. In addition, because my own role in this project is very much that of a *participant*-observer, I will devote a good portion of this report to a description of my own struggles not simply to "observe" bilingual development, but to promote it, and to deal with the issues that arose when that task was not as easy as I might have thought it to be. In that sense, this paper is not intended as an "objective" research report (as no research perhaps ever really is), but as an in-depth analysis of my own struggles in this area, as well as those of the parents of my daughters' friends.

The superheroes win

In the first phase of the study, the power of the English language was symbolized in the power of the English-speaking superhero figures that appeared in the children's dramatic play. The children spoke English *every time* that they play-acted at being a superhero, and *only* when

they play-acted at being someone other than themselves. One of the children, Carlos, captured the power of these creatures in his comments to his mother when he told her that he would not speak Spanish when he grew up, because Superman did not speak Spanish, nor did Peter Pan.

At that time, however, the superheroes did not appear to be winning the battle for language dominance in these children's lives. The children used Spanish for the majority of their social interactions with each other, with their peers, with their teachers at the preschool, and with their families. Three years later, however, the picture has reversed itself. In the observation sessions, the children spoke *no* Spanish spontaneously with each other or with their parents; they were reluctant to use Spanish even when pressed to do so, and in fact, were extremely limited in their abilities to express themselves in Spanish.

A description of the processes leading to this situation, as reconstructed through interviews with the parents for each child, and through my own observations of Elisa over time, follows.

Elisa: Elisa was 2 1/2 years old when she began attending preschool. At that time, although she understood some English, she spoke only Spanish. She had been at the preschool for six months when the patterns of language use that are described in the report of the first phase of this study (Faulstich Orellana, 1992) were recorded.

During the next year and a half, Elisa continued to attend this "bilingual" preschool for three days each week. (The write-up of the first phase describes the ways in which English dominated within this supposed bilingual setting.) On the remaining two days she was at home with me. Over that time period, Elisa gradually used more English and less Spanish for her daily interactions, and showed increasing resistance to the use of Spanish. This began at the preschool, where she interacted with some children who spoke only English. However, by the time she was about 3 1/2 years old (six months after the first phase of data collection), she began using English even with her Spanish speaking friends, including Verónica and Carlos. When I picked her up at the preschool at the end of each day there, she began to respond to me in English when I spoke to her in Spanish. Yet in our days together at home, we continued to speak Spanish.

By the time Elisa was 4 years old, however, she had begun to use only English with me and to protest my uses of Spanish. I found myself pulled in two directions in this matter of language use. On the one hand, I wanted to reinforce Elisa's bilingual development, and I understood that in order to do that it would be necessary to over-emphasize Spanish, especially at home. On the other hand, having open, relaxed communication with my daughter was more important than any "learning plan" I might devise, and I found myself gradually pulled toward English in my interactions with her. When Elisa was about 4 years old, I made the decision to use English with her, while her father continued speaking Spanish, in the hope of moving toward a "two-parent, two-language" model for bilingual development. The following factors influenced this decision:

-Elisa was already speaking English with me consistently and it appeared increasingly unnatural, awkward, and forced for me to speak Spanish with her.

-It became tiresome to call attention to ourselves in public places; the fact that I am white, and not of Latin origins, and that Elisa is blonde and blue-eyed, often caused heads to turn when we spoke in Spanish. While I, as an adult, had the conceptual framework to understand this attention, I felt that the stares, comments, and questions we received conveyed a message to Elisa that there was something odd or wrong about speaking Spanish. But, more critically, I felt that Elisa often received unwarranted merit for being blonde and blue eyed *and* a speaker of Spanish, attention that might serve to build a false sense of superiority. Dark-haired Latino children are not, after all, applauded for speaking Spanish (and in fact are often denigrated for doing so), yet Elisa's Spanish was received in awe. It was hard to tell people that their comments such as "Ayy, ¡que chulo! Mira sus ojos, tan azules. ¡Y habla español! ¡Qué inteligente!" (*"How pretty! Look at her eyes, so blue! And she speaks Spanish! How intelligent!"*) were prejudicial and quite possibly harmful both to their own children and to Elisa. While I could have exploited this attitude as a means to motivate Elisa's Spanish development, I was uncomfortable with the underlying message that was conveyed in the process.

-I had assumed that I would eventually switch into English with Elisa, because English is, after all, my native language, and the language that I will probably always feel most comfortable in. While Spanish served us well for the early years, I knew that I would eventually feel more comfortable and confident using English for parent-child interactions.

When Elisa was 4 1/2 she began attending a new preschool. While there were several Spanish-speaking children at the new school, and at least four of the eleven caregivers spoke Spanish fluently, the program did not pretend to be bilingual but instead used English as the lengua franca. Elisa also began attending the school on a full-time basis, and thus experienced a significant reduction in her exposure to Spanish on a daily basis. It was during this year that her voluntary use of Spanish virtually disappeared, and that she showed marked, overt resistance to the language.

This resistance principally manifested itself in Elisa's interactions with her father, who, for a period of time, tried to *insist* that Elisa speak Spanish with him. Elisa began to avoid spending any time alone with her father, and when the three of us were together she directed all her comments or questions to me, in English. On one occasion she told me, when I had to go out, "But I don't want to stay with daddy. I'll have to speak Spanish!" On another occasion, she reduced this to a more cryptic message: "But I don't want to stay with *the Spanish man.*" And when I had to go away for a four-day conference, she tearfully *begged* her father if they could speak English while I was away.

In part, this resistance to using Spanish appeared to result from Elisa's growing insecurity with the language itself. When she tried to speak, she found it very difficult to express her ideas; she simply did not have the words. Yet even when we attempted to make the language both highly comprehensible and *fun* (using standard "sheltering" techniques), she immediately rejected our efforts, with overt comments such as "Yuck. Not Spanish."

In attempting to respond to this hostility toward a language that we were seeking to cultivate, we made several classical mistakes:

- we lectured her on the beauty of Spanish, at length and ad nauseum.
- we reprimanded her and told her that she *had* to respond in Spanish.
- we took her comments at face value and believed that she really did hate Spanish.

This last point bears elaboration. Elisa protested loudly whenever we attempted to speak Spanish with her, and we believed that this was a sign that she had internalized the negative attitudes toward Spanish that abound in the larger society. Thus, we treated her as if her rejection of Spanish were "real." Yet, gradually, we realized that Elisa protested many things, but that if we allowed her some space to express her protestations, she usually was then ready to engage in the activity, *and enjoy doing it*. Our role as parents seemed to be to allow her to express her feelings, to fully accept the words of protest as a valid expression of her feelings *at that moment*, but to support her in going through with the activity at hand.

After some time, we also caught on to a few effective approaches for encouraging Elisa's productive use of Spanish in a creative and fun way. Elisa initiated one of the most effective approaches herself: playing baby. When Elisa played at being a baby, she used Spanish on her own volition. As adults, we realized we could play along, and use the play as a chance to engage in some "parent-ese," scaffolding Elisa's less developed Spanish by talking with her in simplified language, as if she *were* a baby. Elisa was willing to engage in this play in part because she knew that she *did* speak Spanish (and only Spanish) when she was a baby, and in part because in this kind of play she was able to express herself in precisely the way she wanted; she had the words for Spanish baby talk.

We also made the decision to enroll Elisa in a bilingual kindergarten where she would have some exposure to Spanish each day, and some need to interact with children who spoke only Spanish. This change, which occurred when she was 5 1/2, seemed to help Elisa's attitude toward Spanish; she began to initiate Spanish in her conversations with us on an occasional basis (although still interspersed with many other incidents of protestation). She also showed some willingness to watch Spanish television shows (an activity she had protested vehemently against over the previous two years.)

At the current point in time, at age 5 years, 10 months, Elisa's English is far more advanced than her Spanish in all aspects. She speaks English that is highly proficient for her age, and she speaks Spanish at best like a toddler, with broken fluency. Even her accent in Spanish has significantly deteriorated. Yet her resistance to speaking the language seems slightly lessened, and we have resolved to renew the effort for some degree of bilingualism.

Carlos: The following dialogue transpired between Carlos and his father during our follow-up interview session:

Father: Carlitos, háblame en español.	*Carlitos, talk to me in Spanish.*
Carlos: Puedo, um... *(6 second pause)*	*Can I, um...*
¿Qué estás haciendo?	*What are you doing?*
Father: Estamos hablando de inglés y español, de como hablas español.	*We're talking about English and Spanish, about how you talk Spanish.*
Carlos: Pero yo..*(3 second pause)*	*But I..*
quiero, um, yo quiero, um *(3 second pause)*, quiero, um *(3 second pause)*...	*I want, um, I want, um, I want, um...*
Father: Carlitos, ¿qué quieres?	*Carlitos, what do you want?*
Carlos: I want to show her Pacman.	
Father: O.K., pero dime en español.	*But tell me in Spanish.*
Carlos: Yo quiero, um *(3 second pause)*...	*I want, um...*
Father: La quieres enseñar...	*You want to show her...*
Carlos: Nintendo.	*Nintendo.*
Father: Dime "enseñar." Dime "enseñar."	Say "show." Say "show."
Carlos: Yo no sé como decirse Nintendo.	*I don't know how to say Nintendo.*
Father: Nintendo es Nintendo.	*Nintendo is Nintendo.*
Es como Elisa es Elisa en español.	*It's like Elisa is Elisa in Spanish.*
La quiero enseñar el Nintendo.	*I want to show her the Nintendo.*
Carlos: Yo la quiero enseñar el Nintendo.	*I want to show her the Nintendo.*
Father: O.K., pero más tarde.	*O.K., but later.*
Carlos: ¿Por qué?	*Why?*
Father: Porque estamos hablando ahorita.	*Because we're talking now.*
Carlos: Pero yo la quiero enseñar.	*But I want to show her.*
Father: Muy bien, pero apagas el sonido.	*Very well, but without the sound.*
Sí. *(1 second pause)* O.K. Go ahead.	*Yes...*
(to Elisa) Elisa, do you want to see the Nintendo?	
(to both children) For 5 minutes, O.K.?	
Carlos: *(to Elisa)* O.K., Elisa, look at this.	It's really cool.

This exchange illustrates Carlos's current situation in relation to Spanish. Carlos prefers to speak English, and virtually never initiates a conversation with his parents in Spanish. When pushed, however, as his father at times does, Carlos will attempt to speak Spanish without protest. However, his ability to express himself is limited, much more so now than when he was first observed three years ago, and far more limited than his current ability in English. In the dialogue with his father, Carlos gets stuck after saying "Yo quiero..." *("I want...")* and does not seem to know how to ask for help in communicating his ideas. When his father probes, Carlos quickly switches to English and easily delivers his request. His father insists that he try Spanish, however, and Carlos complies, but he returns to English in his interactions with Elisa, and seems relieved to finish his exchange with his father.

Carlos' parents, who were recently separated, confirmed in separate interviews what was clear from the observations I made: that Carlos understands most messages that are delivered to him in Spanish, and continues to speak some Spanish when pressed to do so, but that his capacities to express himself have severely deteriorated over the last three years, and he shows a decided preference for English.

Carlos' mother, who is a native speaker of Spanish, continues to speak Spanish with him to a limited degree. However, she feels extreme "pressures" to move toward English - pressures that emanate from Carlos himself, as well as from the larger society. She noted that while in the past she was critical of adults speakers of other languages who used English with their children, she now understood the tremendous forces that seem to tug both parents and children toward this society's dominant language.

Carlos' father, Dan, who is a native speaker of English (and who learned Spanish on his own only after marrying Carlos' mother), spoke only Spanish with Carlos in his first three years, but switched to English when Carlos was about 4 years old, because at that time he perceived Carlos' English skills to be weak and he wanted to give him some English support so that he could communicate better with his friends. Until recently, Dan continued to use Spanish with Carlos' younger brother, who, at 4 1/2, appears to be a fairly balanced bilingual who speaks Spanish better than Carlos.

While Carlos' parents now use English with the children for most interactions, Carlos and his brother continue to have some regular, weekly contact with their maternal grandmother, who speaks limited English and thus provides a constant, natural, necessary connection to the Spanish language. When Carlos is with his grandmother, he generally attempts to communicate in Spanish, and she stands as a regular source of "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1985) for his Spanish language development.

Carlos' loss of Spanish occurred most dramatically at the time he entered kindergarten. The small, neighborhood school he attended had no operational bilingual program, and since Carlos spent 5 days each week in kindergarten and in an English-only after-school program, his contact with Spanish decreased severely. Now Carlos is in first grade in a public "magnet" school, where there are a few native Spanish speakers and some attempt to expose all of the children to Spanish (the classroom aide conducts Spanish lessons with the English speaking children while the classroom teacher provides ESL for the class' English learners). At the same time, the majority of the non-English speaking students are Asian, not Spanish speakers, and English is the common language in the room.

Carlos' father feels that while Carlos went through a period of consciously rejecting Spanish, he no longer has any overt resistance to the language itself, but simply tends toward English because that is the language he speaks best. Carlos' parents spent a good deal of time and energy emphasizing the importance of Spanish and the fact that he'll be "smarter or better in some way" if he is bilingual, with an advantage over his English-only friends, and they feel that Carlos in fact wants to speak more Spanish than he does. Yet words in Spanish no longer come easily to him, and in his frustration he turns to English to communicate his ideas.

In concluding our interview, Carlos' father made the following remark: "It's kind of depressing. I really feel like we've lost a lot of ground, and it's going to take a lot of work, hard work, on top of all the other work (school work)" but that he's "not ready to give up the fight." He recognizes that English currently dominates but he will continue to seek some degree of bilingualism for his son.

Verónica: At this point in time, it appears that Verónica has managed to retain a greater productive capacity for Spanish than has either Elisa or Carlos. While she did not once initiate a Spanish conversation in the interview and observation sessions (with me, with her parents, or with other Spanish speaking adults who were visiting the family), she did respond to her parents' requests that she speak in Spanish, and she answered a series of their questions that were directed to her in that language. She was able to find the words to formulate reasonable answers, and after an initial

protest (in which she punched at her mother when she told her that "today is Spanish day"), she did not object to trying out her Spanish for me to see.

At the same time, I had the impression that Verónica was conducting a performance, or trying to supply the right answers on a test, in order to satisfy her parents, but without any genuine commitment on her part. Her answers were minimal ones, engaged without much enthusiasm or elaboration. She appeared limited by the language from expressing her full thoughts, and her use of Spanish felt stilted and unnatural. In between questions, she frequently slipped into an animated, conversational tone to speak about things that were on her mind (that were unrelated to the questions her parents asked); this was always in English. English was clearly her language of choice, and her English was considerably more advanced than her Spanish. While she could hold simple conversations in Spanish with more facility than was observed in the other two children, she did not speak the language as well as she did at age three.

Verónica's parents seemed to want to demonstrate to me that their child *does* speak Spanish, although they shared their concerns about the difficulties they've had in cultivating this ability. They feel that these difficulties have increased over time, and have resulted in a deterioration in Verónica's language ability. Until one year ago, the paternal grandmother, who speaks only Spanish, lived with the family and helped to care for both Verónica and her younger brother. Since she left the home, however, she has had minimal contact with her grandchildren. In her absence, the family hired a part-time housekeeper who assisted with child care for three hours each evening; this woman spoke only Spanish with the children, but as of three months ago she no longer works with the family.

Verónica's father, who immigrated from El Salvador, continues to speak Spanish with his children with few exceptions. He does this principally because he does not feel comfortable communicating with them in English; while he has learned English over the years he has not had much need to use it (he is an artist who works out of his home), nor has he had much desire to do so. He also uses Spanish consistently with his wife, although she uses English to respond to him (a language pattern they established at the beginning of their relationship). Verónica now participates in the language pattern that she is modeled by her parents; she generally responds to her father in English when he speaks to her in English. While her father occasionally tries to insist that she speak to him in Spanish, intra-personal code switching is normal within this household and so is not met with much alarm. Verónica's mother uses English with her children with few exceptions.

After graduating from preschool, Verónica attended a Catholic school, where all students were of Latin origins. The teacher was from Argentina, and used Spanish to support her instruction, although the instructional program was principally delivered in English. Verónica did not stay for long at this school, however, and she now attends first grade in a public elementary school where all instruction is given in English and where the majority of the children are from English speaking homes. Thus, another regular source of Spanish language input has disappeared from Verónica's life within the last year.

Verónica's parents insist that Verónica has never expressed any overt hostility to the use of Spanish, nor has she shown signs of rejecting Latin culture. In fact, they note that she seems especially proud to be part Salvadoran, and that she has invented a fantasy that she was born in El Salvador and will return there to live in the future.

Discussion and conclusions

The "superhuman forces" that began to tug Elisa, Carlos, and Verónica toward the use of English three years ago appear to be winning the current round in the battle for language dominance in these children's lives. All three children have reversed their language dominance within a period of three years, and have less capacity to speak in Spanish at 5 and 6 years of age than they did at ages 2 and 3. This has occurred despite the parents' efforts to expose the children to Spanish in a variety of ways and to motivate their uses of the language.

Perhaps more disturbing than the loss of productive language capacity in these children are the attitudes expressed toward the Spanish language by at least one of the three children (Elisa).

While it could be argued that this negativity toward Spanish results merely from her difficulty using the language, the ways in which the negativity is expressed suggests that she has internalized attitudes toward Spanish that abound in the larger society, and that she is seeking at some level to establish their own identity by separating herself from those who speak Spanish.

At the same time, the fact that attitudes can change is suggested by Carlos' situation, and to some extent that of Elisa. Carlos went through a period of overtly rejecting the language, yet his parents feel that he has put that behind him and now in fact wants to regain the abilities he has lost. While Elisa continues to express some resistance to using Spanish, she, too, has modified her attitude and her parents feel there is still hope for regaining some of the language.

It is difficult to say why Carlos and Verónica appear to have less negative attitudes than Elisa, or why Verónica is particularly proud of her cultural heritage. This may be due to the closer contact that these two have had with their Spanish speaking relatives, to the efforts their parents have made to counter any expressed negative attitudes, or to other individual life experiences. Notably, while Elisa and Verónica are both fair (like their mothers, who represent the Caucasian half of their ancestry), Carlos is dark haired, with brown skin, like his Guatemalan mother (while his father is blonde). In part because of the way brown children are treated in this society, and in part because Carlos resembles his mother more than his father, Carlos may have had to engage in a greater struggle for self-identity, and has responded to the validation of Spanish (and Latin people) that his parents have emphasized. Elisa and Verónica, on the other hand, have the option of "acting white" and blending in with the dominant culture; Elisa appears to have opted to deny her Latin half to herself, while Verónica has done the opposite. The reasons for these differences, and their consequences, would require further investigation.

While it is difficult to draw broad generalizations from these three cases, what *is* clear is that the factors that shape children's bilingual development are complex. The language patterns to which children are exposed at home, at school, and in the larger society may exert the greatest influence. But children do not merely imitate the patterns that they see modeled around them. They actively construct their own uses of, and attitudes toward the two languages, in a complex process of linguistic development that is intertwined with the formation of their very identities.

While the current round in the battle for language dominance in these children's lives may be lost, the struggle for some degree of bilingualism is not yet over. It appears unlikely that these children will be able to develop as "balanced" bilinguals, with an equal ability in each language (unless family circumstances change dramatically), yet there is no reason to assume that they cannot continue to develop some degree of Spanish ability and to accept Spanish as a part of their lives. Both abilities and attitudes can and do change, as the patterns in these children's lives would suggest. Through their efforts to continue the struggle for Spanish, the parents of these children may give them much more than a dose of bilingualism; they may help them to accept and to love all aspects of their own selves, and to approach the world around them with a more open mind.

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